

SEIU Local 1021 Strike Fact Sheet

As we approach our strike authorization vote and the possibility of a strike, members have raised a number of questions. Here we answer some of the more common ones.

AHS FIGHT



Why are we talking about a strike?

We have been bargaining for 9 months, and AHS management has refused to bargain in good faith. They have proposed hundreds of pages of takeaways that include big cuts to wages, benefits, and patient care. AHS has rejected most of our proposals for a fair contract and a fair workplace and has even tried to limit things that are none of their business, like the number of union stewards we can have. All of us need to be ready to strike to show AHS we back our bargaining team, we will not tolerate these unfair labor practices on their part, and will not allow cuts to patient care and our contract.

What's the process?

Our bargaining teams would ask us to give them authority to call a strike. Then we vote. Only dues-paying members can vote. According to our union bylaws, a strike can be authorized by a simple majority of those who vote. The vote is a demonstration of our strength, so the more people who vote and the more people who vote to strike, the more pressure it puts on AHS to give us what we need.

If we give the bargaining team the authority to call a strike, they will be able to do so at any point afterwards, if that's what it takes to win a good contract.

What makes a strike successful?

When we all act together, we are successful. It's all about power: when all of us are united, we are strongest. If we can't stay united, we are weak. The recent LA, Chicago, and Oakland teacher

strikes are good examples for us: they all involved HIGH participation from union members. Teachers stayed united around their demands for better schools and fair contracts, and they forced their employers to back down.

I heard that we are not allowed to strike, and that there is a "no strike" clause in our contract.

The no strike clause in our contract is not in effect anymore because the contract has expired. As a result, we have a right to strike as public workers, and that right is protected by California law. California courts have found time and again that public workers have a right to strike free from retaliation.

Does AHS have to follow our expired 2017-2020 contract?

Yes, AHS still has to follow it, even if it is expired.

How long will a strike last?

The bargaining team will make that decision. We will give a 10-day notice prior to going on strike. The bargaining team will decide whether to issue a notice for an open-ended strike or one of limited duration.

If we vote to strike, will we strike at all AHS locations?

Yes. Members under all three AHS contracts, including the General Unit, the RNs, and the San Leandro Hospital members, will vote together and strike together. In addition, the California Nurses Association represents nurses at San

Want to Know More or Get Involved?

Contact Your Union Representative
Or Elected Bargaining Team Member

- Diana Bello: 415.361.9476
- Ariana Casanova: 415.370.5336
- Michael Floyd: 510.590.2782
- Andre Spearman: 510.387.5341

SEIU 1021 Member Resource Center:
1-877-687-1021

Leandro and Alameda Hospital. They have been in negotiations with AHS for over a year, and will be holding their own strike votes soon. Other unions at AHS are likely to exercise their right to honor our picket lines.

If we authorize a strike, will we walk out right away?

No. A strike is serious business and requires preparation. In addition to organizing our coworkers, we're reaching out to community allies and other supporters to ensure a successful strike action. After a vote to authorize a strike, we will also get our strike sanctioned by the Alameda Labor Council and approved by the SEIU 1021 Executive Board. The law requires a 10-day notice to strike in the private healthcare sector. In the interest of public health, we will give AHS a 10-day notice of our strike as well. This will give patients time to make other arrangements and AHS time to reschedule what they can and transfer patients out.

Do we have to notify our bosses that we are going on strike?

No. If a majority of members vote yes to authorize a strike, your elected union officers will give AHS management notice on all our behalf. We will give advance notice so that AHS can prepare to provide needed patient care.

Can I be fired or retaliated against for striking? Can we be permanently replaced or "locked out"?

No. The law protects workers who are exercising their right to take legal, collective action.

Can probationary employees strike?

Probationary employees have a right to strike. We will take steps to protect the right of probationary workers to strike. SEIU Local 1021 has held numerous strikes in recent years across Northern California and probationary employees have successfully participated in those strikes.

What does strike authorization mean?

A strike authorization vote means members vote whether to give the bargaining team the authority to call a strike when they believe the situation warrants it.

What will happen if I cross the picket line?

Will the union sanction me?

There is no provision for "sanctioning"

members who cross the picket line. But you should consider how crossing will affect your relations with your coworkers if they are out making sacrifices you will benefit from. If you cross the picket line, you are making it more difficult for us all to win a good contract.

Can we just call in sick during the strike or take vacation time?

Management is likely to be suspicious of a sick call on the day of the strike. A strike is not a day off. It is a different kind of workday, to protect our jobs and improve conditions for us and our patients. In the current contract, you have the option to sell back PTO if you need extra income instead of taking vacation time. We will win a better contract by showing our power with everyone on the picket lines.

When we are on strike, do we lose pay for that time?

AHS will not pay wages while we are out on strike.

Will the union pay us while we are out on strike?

No, we are striking for a fair contract and to win better conditions for our patients and all of us. AHS is planning wage freezes and cuts to benefits and patient care. Because they still won't bargain in good faith after 9 months of bargaining, a strike is our final, strongest option to win a fair contract. Also, your AHS Chapter Officers are working on setting up a hardship fund for members who have a serious emergency during a strike.

What about my health benefits?

Health benefits are paid by employers month-to-month, so a strike of less than a month should not disrupt coverage.

What about my patients?

We will give AHS management and the public advance notice so that non-essential work can be postponed or cancelled. Because public health is a top priority, we will also create a patient protection team that will get a "pass" from the picket line and go to work if it is necessary.

How will I know if a strike is called?

We will use all available ways to notify our members. The best thing you can do is make sure your cell phone number and personal email address are updated here: https://bit.ly/2020-get_union_updates